DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 272 624 UD 025 030

AUTHOR Raivetz, Mark J.
TITLE School Improvement and Desegregation in a Large Urban School District: Complementary (Not Contradictory) Initiatives.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Desegregation Methods; *Desegregation Plans; Elementary Secondary Education; *Magnet Schools; Neighborhood Schools; Organizational Change; Racially Balanced Schools; *School Desegregation; Urban Schools; *Voluntary Desegregation
IDENTIFIERS Philadelphia School District PA

ABSTRACT

In October 1983, the School District of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission signed a memorandum of understanding that resulted in a Modified Desegregation Plan. The plan itself consisted of three complementary initiatives: (1) an educational improvement component promising systemwide educational reforms, specialized programs, and a comprehensive school improvement project for the district's 75 lowest achieving schools; (2) a desegregation expansion strategy promising racially balanced faculties, programs within desegregated schools to foster integration, and the targeting of 50 additional schools for desegregation; and (3) an effort to reduce racial isolation promising augmented curricular units focusing on multicultural and interpersonal understandings for students remaining in racially isolated schools, an increase in shared time/shared facility programs, and a citywide mobilization of public and private agencies to support the schools. Philadelphia has made a genuine effort to have concurrent desegregation and school improvement, although in some areas these efforts conflict. The successful desegregated school is a coordination of many different elements involving nearly every important feature of organizational behavior: motivation, decision making, intergroup and interpersonal conflict, cooperation and communication. The district's plan is being carefully monitored by the Pennsylvania State Human Relations Commission. (MCK)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED272624

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND DESEGREGATION IN A LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT: COMPLEMENTARY (NOT CONTPADICTORY) INITIATIVES

Prepared by
Mark J. Raivetz*
Trenton Public Schools
Trenton, New Jersey

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mark J. Raivetz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 1986

* The author formerly served as Research Associate for Desegregation and School Improvement, School District of Philadelphia.

UD025030

THE MODIFIED DESEGREGATION PLAN'S THREE COMPONENTS

In October 1983, the School District of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission signed a memorandum of understanding, resulting in a Modified Desegregation Plan that effectively ended some 15 years of often acrimonious litigation. The plan itself consisted of three complementary initiatives:

- an educational improvement component promising systemwide educational reforms, specialized programs, and a comprehensive school improvement project for the District's 75 lowest achieving schools;
- a Desegregation expansion strategy promising racially balanced faculties, programs within desegregated schools to foster integration, and the targeting of 50 additional schools for desegregation;
- an effort to reduce racial isolation promising augmented curricular units focusing on multicultural and interpersonal understandings for students remaining in racially isolated schools, an increase in shared time/shared facility programs, and a citywide mobilization of public and private agencies to support the schools.

These components sought to achieve the legally required "maximum feasible desegregation" in light of Philadelphia's "geographic and demographic realities," while concurrently implementing the educational reforms of a new administration: a standardized curriculum; a new curriculum referenced testing program; increased graduation requirements; and a new promotion policy.

The Desegregation/School Improvement Evaluation Unit, a part of the District's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, was charged with the overall evaluation of the Modified Desegregation Plan. Their products and services included needs assessment, demographic analyses,

student transfer and transportation processing, management studies and surveys, proposal development, mandated evaluations, staff development, and school improvement planning.

In terms of the overall organization of the District, educational improvement was the responsibility of the Curriculum divisions; desegregation expansion the responsibility to the Desegregation office; and reduction of racial isolation the responsibility of School Operations. The Superintendent's special consultant for Desegregation headed the DESEGROUP, senior District staff who coordinated the components.

The evaluation unit was the one group that crossed all organizational lines. As such they had the best view of the Plan's complementary initiatives over the last two years.

This paper has three major objectives:

- To describe the major initiatives and the ways in which they complement each other;
- To examine the impact of the Modified Desegregation Plan on the various stakeholders - parents, students, teachers, principals and central office administration; and
- To relate each of the initiatives to the District's educational reform package, on both a theoretical and a practical basis.

The perspective of the paper is two-fold: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, Hawley, Crain and Pride (1981) discuss urban districts as parts of political systems that are themselves political subsystems. Before desegregation, programs, policies and procedures arrive at a state of equilibrium (with an inequitable pattern of education). Desegregation introduces a new set of demands which require organizational and programmatic accommodation, adaptation, or institutionalization. The question that emerges is clear: Can a

district institutionalize " adaptive capacity in the service of equity" without bumping into itself at each crucial turn?

This paper addresses that question through an examination of Philadelphia's Modified Desegregation Plan.

Specific examples describing how well the Plan's three complementary initiatives relate are presented.

Examples of desegregation and school improvement initiatives that initially appeared to be in conflict are described. Questions to be addressed by district planners are proposed.

THE EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT COMPONENT

The Modified Desegregation Plan set out the School District's commitment to formulate and implement a comprehensive educational improvement plan for "schools identified as needing additional assistance to achieve their educational objectives." Schools in this category were designated Priority One.

School Selection

Results from the statewide Test of Essential Learning and Literacy Skills (TELLS) and the School District's citywide curriculum-referenced tests, along with a three year analysis of CAT data were used to identify the seventy-six schools included in the Priority One Initiative.

The Mission

The commitment to educational improvement in Priority One schools required a whole school (schoolwide) improvement program and a strategy focusing on redeployment and effective utilization of existing resources

as opposed to the continuation of a strategy whose primary focus was upon programmatic additions.

From their initial development and formal presentation in the Superintendent's Statement of Governance (October 1982), the goals and objectives of the District were clear. They served to define the systemwide school improvement agenda. The Standardized Curriculum specified instructional objectives by subject and grade. The citywide testing program measured these objectives. Other initiatives previously cited, including promotion policy and increased requirements for high school graduation, were linked directly to the new curriculum. The school planning guidelines required that schools identify specific school-based changes necessary to implement these new initiatives.

Not all of the District's schools were at the same stage in the school improvement process. Within the context of the systemwide goals, the mission of the Priority One initiative was to change 75 low-achieving schools into schools that regularly demonstrated achievement -- mastery of grade level objectives in reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and writing -- and a climate that supports learning for their students.

Premises and Assumptions

Philadelphia was not the first large urban district to implement a school improvement process.

Lezotte and Bancroft (1985) summarized local school improvement programs nationwide by citing some common elements: the school is the unit for improvement, a building-based improvement team is in place, a long-term planning and implementation period (3-5 years) is necessary, the program is research-based, and most importantly, each school has

accepted the following six basic premises and assumptions as the rationale and foundation of the long-term effort:

Premise 1: Virtually all of our students are capable of learning grade level material to the level of mastery.

Premise 2: The primary purpose of schooling is teaching and learning.

Premise 3: The basis for assessing school effectiveness is in terms of student outcomes.

Premise 4: The way in which the local school district assesses student outcomes accurately represents the educational outcomes that the school or district cares most about.

Premise 5: An effective school is able to demonstrate both quality and equity in its program outcomes.

Premise 6: Quality and equity are achieved and maintained only when the school improvement effort has been designed to monitor benefits for all students.

Organizational Change

Finally, Priority One paid close attention to what is known about the change process in organizations. The recent literature in this area makes three key points. The first is that change is a process, not an event, and that significant change takes considerable time. The second is that the process is not a rational one. One cannot assume that changes will be adopted simply because they are needed or will be maintained simply because they work. The third is that successful change goes through predictable phases, usually labelled initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. All of these require carefully developed strategies and substantial effort in addition to spelling out the nature of the change initially. (Corbett, Dawson and

Firestone, 1984; Rosenblum and Louis, 1981; Berman and McLaughlin, 1976; Berman, 1981).

This was especially true in a District that was in the process of simultaneously implementing a desegregation expansion strategy. A strategy dependent upon minority students, most of whom come from these Priority One schools, volunteering to attend predominantly white middle class school's across the city.

THE DESEGREGATION EXPANSION COMPONENT

Upon adopting the Modified Desegregation Plan, the District committed to achieving the maximum feasible school desegregation in the shortest practicable time. In pursuing that goal, the Plan set out three promises: (1) to maintain a racially balanced instructional staff; (2) to increase the number of desegregation schools; and (3) to foster a climate conducive to academic achievement, social growth, and integration.

A Racially Balanced Instructional Staff

The District's 11,043 teachers, 6,698 of whom are White, 4,237 Black, 88 Hispanic, and 20 other minorities, are racially balanced in all of the District's 259 schools. This status was accomplished through the reassignment of teachers to maintain a faculty ratio at each school of between 75 percent and 125 percent of the systemwide proportions of White and Black teachers. These proportions are calculated separately for each of the levels: elementary, junior high, high school, and special education centers. Thus, each school at each level is required to employ no less than 75 percent and no greater than 125 percent of the proportion of Black teachers employed systemwide by the District.

An Increase in the Number of Desegregated Schools

The School District promised to move 50 additional schools toward desegregation: thirty-nine (39) schools were targeted for desegregation by 1986-87; and eleven (11) schools were targeted for desegregation by 1988-1989. Substantial progress has been made toward keeping that promise. Data show that between April 1983 and Fall 1985, the School District succeeded in desegregating an additional twenty-six (26) schools. The number of desegregated schools increased by more than 13,000. Moreover, both the number of minority and the number of White pupils in desegregated schools increased substantially. Data show that 28 percent of the schools are now desegregated (compared to 18 percent in 1983), that 27 percent of the total enrollment is now attending desegregated schools (compared to 19 percent in 1983) and that over 46 percent of the White pupils are now attending desegregated schools (compared to only 29 percent in April 1983). The net increase of 18 desegregated schools increased the number of pupils receiving a desegregated educational experience from 38,000 to over 52,000, or by over 36 percent. The racial composition of the 71 desegregated schools is 55 percent minority and 45 percent White.

Progress toward increasing the number of desegregated schools was achieved through a pre-implementation planning process involving technical assistance to targeted schools, a coordinated student recruitment and assignment strategy, an improved information dissemination/communications system, and a restructured transportation scheduling function.

Pre-implementation planning included the targeting of schools and recruitment zones, the briefing of key groups, the assignment of

supportive personnel, and the development of individual school desegregation plans. Fifty,(50) schools were targeted for desegregation, the principals were briefed on their roles under the Modified Desegregation Plan and each school was assigned a desegregation coordinator.

Student recruitment was conducted both broadly in terms of a systemwide outreach effort and in a more focused mode because of the attempt to target schools and designate recruitment zones. This recruitment drive included the briefing of potential recruiters and the counseling of parents and students on available options.

Central administration held a series of briefing sessions on the Plan and recruitment counseling procedures. Groups briefed included representatives of local agencies and organizations, recruitment zone, school principals, administrators, and school counselors. Another briefing mechanism was initiated in the form of "DESEGRAMS," which were mailed periodically to keep principals and school staffs informed of developments regarding the desegregation program.

An extensive parent counseling effort was conducted through ten desegregation "outreach" centers strategically located throughout the City. The centers were operated by central and district office administrators, principals, desegregation office staff, and student volunteers. Parents were counseled on available educational options and were assisted in applying for transfers.

The student assignment function included the processing of transfer applications, the notification of parents of action taken on the transfer requests, the reduction of waiting lists, and the filling of late vacancies.

To expedite processing and to ensure prompt notification of parents as to action taken on requests, many parents were contacted via telephone, in addition to being notified by letter. An effort was made to obtain feedback as to whether students planned to accept assignments for desegregation. Cards were mailed to parents confirming assignments.

The dissemination of information/communications system was restructured to promote and support the desegregation effort. An expanded internal and external communications network included use of the electronic and print media, correspondence, public presentations, and direct contact with parents, staffs, and communities. Moreover, the Desegregation Hotline, operated by central administration professional staff, served as a counseling vehicle as well as a source of information for parents on action taken on transfer requests.

The desegregation transportation system was reviewed, reorganized, and upgraded. This process involved restructuring bus routes, enhancing data management capability, increasing adult supervision on buses and at pick-up points, and improving communication channels with parents.

A Climate Conducive to Academic Achievement, Social Growth and Integration

Recognizing the need to support students and their parents, the District provided a series of pre-matriculation and first day-of-school orientation sessions in the targeted schools.

School counselors were charged with monitoring transferees attendance, academic achievement, social adjustment, and involvement in extra curricular activities.

Desegregation coordinators, and counselors conducted exit-interviews with students and parents who requested to return to their neighborhood schools.

The Evaluation Unit surveyed parents via telephone to collect more extensive data as to why parents opted out of the desegregation program.

THE EFFORT TO REDUCE RACIAL ISOLATION

This, the third major component of the Plan, is more supportive and programmatic. Tied to the standardized curriculum it focused on students remaining in racially isolated schools (many of which were Priority One).

Curriculum units focusing on multicultural and interpersonal understandings were developed. In addition, the District developed a series of shared-time and shared-facility programs for racially isolated students to interact.

The District also acted to mobilize a broad cross section of civic, business and community groups to lend their expertise to the Desegregation Plan.

LOOKING AT THE DATA

The Priority One Initiative is still in its implementation stage. No real outcome data are yet available. This section of the paper examines data collected from the students, parents, teachers and principals who have participated in the Desegregation Expansion component. Special attention is drawn towards those findings that complement (or contradict) the School Improvement component.

Philadelphia has, as successfully as any District in this country, developed the necessary policies and procedures to handle what many have called "first generation" desegregation problems -- selecting the kids and getting them there. As the desegregation process matures, new concerns we must be attend to; "second generation" desegregation problems.

A desegregation plan, voluntary or mandatory, touches all parts of a District. Benefits learned as a result of Desegregation (an improved transportation system as one example), have had a positive impact systemwide. School systems are parts of political systems that are themselves political subsystems. In the course of normal events, they reach a state of equilibrium. Before desegregation, programs, policies and procedures maintain inequality, (whether intentional or not). Desegregation introduces a new set of demans which require organizational and programmatic change. It touches everything!

The Evaluation Unit collected data on the following components of the desegregation plan: returns to neighborhood schools, extra curricular activities, teacher and principal attitudes and suspensions.

Return to Neighborhood Schools

Parents of students in Philadelphia want control over where their children attend school (Raivetz, 1983). The court approved voluntary desegregation plan recognized this and allowed parents to maintain that control. In a very real sense however, a voluntary desegregation plan may be more difficult for a district to maintain than a plan that calls for mandatory student assignment. It is a second generation concern.

The same transfer procedures that enable a child to volunteer for desegregation enable that same child to return to a segregated neighborhood school.

The District rarely has more than one chance with a child who volunteers for desegregation. Should that child and his family have an unsatisfactory experience, the District stands to lose (through non-participation) siblings, relatives and friends as well.

The commitment to desegregating predominantly White targeted schools is affected negatively by students returning to their segregated neighborhood schools.

Parents who withdraw their children were contacted by phone and administered a questionnaire to determine "why." During 1984-85, there were 532 requests to return (of 8,035 total transfer requests). The Evaluation Unit summarized 406 complete questionnaires. These parents cited 1,150 reasons for taking their children out of desegregated schools. These reasons fell into six categories:

1. Curriculum/Coursework: The student was falling behind in classes; the work was too hard; student not finding academic success.

2. Dislike of the school: The student was dissatisfied with his classmates, teachers or school administration; or was experiencing other school related problems including attendance, cutting, lateness racial conflict, discipline.

3. Administrative: The student moved; the school administration requested an administrative transfer; the transfer request had been cancelled.

4. Transportation: The student was experiencing transportation problems (SEPTA or contracted bus); bus ride too long; pick-up too early; service undependable; discipline problems on buses; safety concerns at pick-up and drop-off points.

5. Family: The parent wanted the child closer to home; student wants to be near friends; parents unable to get to school in emergency.

6. Health: The parent cited physical or emotional health of the student.

Reasons for returning to neighborhood schools -- for opting out of the Voluntary Desegregation Plan -- varied. Some parents cited more than one reason. Decisions to return were also dependent on the grade organization of a child's schools and the time of year the request was made.

The greatest reason cited by parents of children in Special Admission High Schools was Curriculum/Coursework. This finding was consistent for Fall and Spring, accounting for over half of the requests to return (52.58%) throughout the year.

In targeted Comprehensive High Schools, parents cited Transportation as the primary reason for requesting returns (26.22%), followed by Administrative and Curriculum/Coursework concerns. From Fall to Spring, Transportation reasons dropped off slightly while Administrative and Curriculum/Coursework reasons increased.

In targeted Junior/Middle and Elementary Schools, Transportation was again cited by parents as the primary reason for requesting a return to the neighborhood school (29.41%). It should be noted however, that management reforms within the Division of Transportation were reflected in the proportionate drop in this category from Fall (41.89% of the reasons) to Spring (23.78% of the reasons). Dislike of the school and Administrative reasons were also stated by parents of children attending these schools.

In summary, transportation related reasons dropped from Fall to Spring (28.29% to 17.40%) with a corresponding increase in the number of Curriculum/Coursework reasons (8.86% to 31.86%). Dislike of the school

(19.85% Fall; 13.79% Spring), and Administrative (14.89% Fall; 13.52 Spring) both dropped. Family, Health and Other categories accounted for a smaller proportion of reasons for returning. For the most part, these reasons are beyond the District's power to control.

Implications for Desegregation Policy are many. Systemwide initiatives such as the Standardized Curriculum, Citywide Testing Program and Promotion Policy must be implemented with great care in target and desegregated schools so as to prevent the resegregation that has occurred in other large urban districts. Additional academic support programs may have to be developed to assist transferring studerts.

Special admissions high schools, whose students account for the largest proportion of these returns, will need to give these concerns special attention.

The District's ability to decrease the number of return to neighborhood school requests by parents for their children is related directly to the support it is willing to give to this effort.

Extra Curricular Activities

The Evaluation Unit observed extra curricular activities in targeted schools and surveyed teachers who were responsible for running those activities in order to determine whether minority students were participating.

Results of this survey were good news to desegregation management staff. In the eleven (11) targeted elementary schools who were included, over half, 54%, of the minority students participated in an E.C. activity. Proportionally, minority representation was higher than that of white neighborhood students. Schools were conscious of

transportation arrangements -- 55 of 69 E.C. activities met during lunch periods.

Participation, by race, is shown below.

	Total Students	% Race	Students Participating N	%	Percentage of Student Body Participating
White	4,102	73.8%	1,293	62.2%	31/5%
Minority	1,454	26.2%	785	37.8%	54.0%
Total	5,556	100%	2,078	100%	37.4%

Perceptions of Principals and Teachers in Targeted and Desegregated Schools

Principals and teachers in 116 targeted and desegregated schools were surveyed in June 1985. Demographically, teachers in these schools were found to be older, but not significantly so, than teachers in racially isolated schools.

There were real differences, statistical differences, between target and desegregated principals as a group and other principals in this system. Principals of targeted and desegregated schools were older, and less representative racially, than the rest of the principals. The internal migration of principals throughout the system can explain these findings, and they should not be examined in isolation. Still, they warrant some attention, especially with respect to the way in which students and their parents may perceive their new schools.

Regularly Appointed Principals as of June 30, 1985

Race	School Assignment: Target/Deseg. N	%	Other N	%	Total N	%
White	103	88.8	58	42.0	161	63.4
Minority	13	11.2	80	58.0	93	36.6
Total	116		138		254	

A Chi-Square analysis found a statistically significant difference by race in the way principals are distributed in Target/Desegregated schools: $X2 = 54.67$; $p<0001$

Perceptions of principals and teachers may influence attitudes of parents and their children. This is especially true for students who may transfer from a predominantly minority, Priority One school.

The survey is based on returns from 282 (of 600) teachers and 51 (of 116) principals.

Key findings of the surveys:

- 53.9% of the teachers have been teaching in the same school for more than 11 years;
- 60.0% of the principals have been in their current positions for at least six years (4 years before the desegregation plan was implemented);
- 59.8% of teachers and 70.0% of principals believe academic standards have remained the same since the desegregation plan was implemented;
- Teachers and principals cited these areas as most in need of improvement to enhance desegregation.
  - Transportation
  - Safety for minority children in white neighborhoods
  - Community relations, attitudes and support
  - More staff sensitivity to cultural differences

. Fewer decisions based on special interest groups

. More parental involvement

. Teachers and principals cited these effects of the new Systemwide Promotion Policy and higher standards on their desegregation efforts.

. Students will have to assume more responsibility and work harder.

. Fewer promotions; more failures; dropouts at an earlier age.

. More minority children will be retained in grade and develop inferiority complex.

. Special education and ESOL students will suffer.

. Minority children who receive Chapter I funds do not receive additional support in desegregated schools.

. Very little, our school policy resembles the systemwide policy.

. Disproportionate number of minority students may be retained initially.

. Most minority pupils will be retained while most of our white pupils will be promoted.

. Impact will impede desegregation process.

Higher standards and desegregation of these schools are perceived, by many principals and teachers, to be in conflict. The impact of these perceptions on minority students must be taken seriously, especially in light of the findings on school suspensions.

Suspensions

Differential rates of suspensions are the most obvious and most difficult of the "second generation" concerns. This is particularly true in districts where most of the movement involves minority students. An analysis of 1984-85 District data offers confirmation.

There are good reasons and legitimate causes for suspending a student. The fact remains that suspension is very often subjective.

One principal may suspend for a gun, another may suspend for gum, to cite a ridiculous extreme.

Rates were examined using a Chi-Square test to determine whether the number of suspensions observed differed statistically from the number of suspensions expected between white and black students. There was, as you would expect, more variation between than within schools. A total of 112 Chi-Square tests were completed. Alpha levels were adjusted, with p .01. Findings were clear.

SUSPENSION RATES FOR SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN THE DESEGREGATION PLAN FOR 1984-85

All Schools		Total	Significant X^2 (White	Minority)	Non-Significant X^2
112	N	53	(4	49)	59
	%		(3.6	43.8)	
	%	47.3	(7.5	92.5)	52.7
Newly Targeted					
60	N	38	(2	36)	22
	%		(3.3	60.0)	
	%	63.3	(5.3	94.7)	36.7
Other Schools					
52	N	15	(2	13)	37
	%		(3.8	25.0)	
	%	28.8	(13.3	86.7)	71.2

Of 112 targeted or desegregated schools, 53 were shown to have statistically significant suspension rates ($p \leq .01$). Among those whose rates were significant, 92.5% had minority suspension rates that were significantly higher. When the schools were further split into two categories, those schools newly desegregated or targeted for desegregated (N=60), and those schools that have been naturally desegregated, the differences become more striking.

Of 60 newly desegregated schools, 38 (63.3%) had statistically significant rates of suspension. Of those 38, 36 (94.7%) suspended more minority than white students.

In the 52 other schools which could be considered stably desegregated, the findings were more positive. Only 15 schools (28.8%) had significant suspension rates, although 13 of those 15 suspended more minority than white students.

The results show that suspension rates continue to be a major second generation problem. There is some hope, however, when looking at schools which had been desegregated prior to the desegregation plan. These schools had far fewer significant findings, suggesting that over time, administrators and students get to know one another better. Some combination of internalized roles, mutual acceptance, and assimilation make it less likely that one would be able to predict who gets suspended merely by looking at the color of a child's skin.

COMPLEMENTARY VS. CONTRADICTORY: QUESTIONS IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS

Philadelphia has made a real effort to have both school improvement and desegregation take place concurrently. As previously noted, the desegregation plan itself is primarily a school improvement plan. Like other large urban districts, Philadelphia is overwhelmingly minority (75%) and poor (over 160 schools receiving Chapter 1 services). In some areas, unavoidably, student movement for desegregation and school improvement initiatives for students bump into each other. It is not a small problem, nor one the district chooses to ignore.

Once parents opt into a district's desegregation plan, a commitment is made. To achieve success, lots of supports need to be in place. Regrettably, there are some built-in conflicts.

Staffing

The district maintains established regulations for transferring between schools. Teachers, so long as they do not violate the 75% - 125% ratio, may voluntarily transfer to new school assignments. Results of the teachers' survey support the fact that the majority of teachers in newly desegregated schools are white and have been teaching in predominantly white schools well before the desegregation plan encouraged minority students to transfer. In fact, many of these teachers used their seniority in the system to transfer to these schools (mostly because they are closer to where they may live). A teacher commits no illegal act by following district guidelines when requesting a transfer. The net result, however, may be teachers without recent experiences in teaching in desegregating buildings.

What holds for teachers holds equally for the principals of these schools. The principals are not assigned by any racial balance formula.

The questions to be addressed by district planners:

How and what types of training can be provided to make teachers and principals aware of individual differences and the needs of transferring students and their families?

Student Concerns of Equity and Equality

Most of the students volunteering for desegregation attend low achieving schools, many of which are Priority One. These are the children in the greatest need of academic support. Many of them are receiving Chapter 1 services. Yet, the parents of these students are encouraged to volunteer their children for desegregation. The schools

to which they transfer are not Chapter 1 eligible. Service cannot follow a child. Once in the new school, lacking all of the supports they voluntarily left for desegregation, they may face academic resegregation. Those unable to keep up with their white neighborhood school classmates may fall prey to the very same stereotypes desegregation was intended to explode.

The question to be addressed by district planners:

What types of academic and social supports can be developed and provided in order to ensure transferring students are given every possible opportunity to succeed?

District Initiatives and Standards for Excellence in Education

Upon her appointment in October 1982, the Superintendent promised a series of new academic initiatives. Most are now in place. They include a standardized curriculum that requires teachers to teach all material on grade level, an end to social promotions through the implementation of a rigid promotion policy, and a new testing program. While generally accepted throughout the district as "something that needed to be done," the impact of these initiatives upon the desegregation process is not expected to be positive. Principals and teachers, when surveyed, identified these concerns as having the potential to impact negatively on desegregation in their schools.

Without appropriate academic supports, more students who transferred would be retained in grade. The number of students returning to their neighborhood schools would increase.

The question to be addressed by district planners:

Can programs and procedures be developed to increase the academic supports for students transferring for desegregation so that resegregation is minimized and parents and their children are not penalized for supporting the district's desegregation efforts?

FINAL THOUGHTS ON EQUITY AND EQUALITY

The district's plan is being monitored carefully by the Pennsylvania State Human Relations Commission. In addition, the Office for Civil Rights has expressed interest in much of the district's data.

The successful desegregated school is a coordination of many different elements involving nearly every important feature of organizational behavior: motivation, decision making, intergroup and interpersonal conflict, cooperation and communication: Forehand, et al. (1976) present both principles and specific suggestions. Effective desegregated schools may be characterized by 4 distinguishing features: salience, intercultural sensitivity, interdependence, and equity.

1. Salience has both motivational and perceptual components. Successful desegregation is a highly salient goal for most people in effective schools. Motivationally, desegregation as a goal must be internalized by both staff and students. Perceptually, there must be a high degree of attention to the school's desegregation process. Staff must be alert to indications of success or failure. Salience implies an absence of racially prejudiced behavior on the part of the staff and positive attitudes on the part of the students.

2. Intercultural sensitivity, is a feature of effective desegregated schools that is absolutely essential in order to design and carry out educational programs responsively. The cultural backgrounds of all students, with respect to behavior patterns, self-concept, and aspirations must be clearly understood by all.

3. Interdependence is a sense of "school family." It implies shared objectives, mutual concern, and mutual sensitivity. Members of the family include administration, faculty, students, as well as parents.

4. Equity implies fairness and justice for every individual in the school, regardless of race. It is the one feature that, according to Edmonds (1979) makes the school effective. Forehand sees equity as neither "synonymous with nor antithetical to" equality. Desegregated schools may provide equal opportunity for all students to participate in activities without providing equity. Often geographic location, cultural tradition, or minority status are barriers to equal participation. If, according to the authors, minority students must work harder because of a heavier burden of transportation, negative expectations or informal discrimination, the effect is "inequity." A passive policy of equality is not enough. An effective desegregated school establishes equity through constant monitoring and positive action.

REFERENCES

Berman, P. Toward an Implementation Paradigm. In R. Lehming and M. Kane (Eds), Improving Schools: Using What We Know. Beverly Hills, CA Sage, 1981.

Berman, P. and McLaughlin, M.W. Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1975.

Corbett, H.D., Dawson, J., and Firestone, W. School Context and School Change. New York: Teachers College Press, 1984.

Edmonds, R.R. Effective Schools for the Urban Poor. Educational Leadership 37, 15-27, 1979.

Forehand, G.A., Ragosta, M., and Rock, D.A. Conditions and Processes of Effective School Desegregation. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1976.

Hawley, W.D., Crain, R.L., and Pride, R. An agenda for further research on desegregation strategies. In W.D. Hawley (ED.) Assessment of Current Knowledge about Effective Desegregation Strategies. Center for Educational and Human Development. Institute for Policy Studies. Vanderbilt University, 1981, Volume II.

Lezotte, L.W. and Bancroft, B.A. Growing Use of the Effective Schools Model for School Improvement. Educational Leadership 42 (6) 23-27, March, 1985.

Rosenblum, F. and Louis, K.S. Stability and Change. N.Y. Plenum, 1981.

School District of Philadelphia. Status Report on the Modified Desegregation Plan. December, 1984.

School District of Philadelphia. The Priority One Initiative. December, 1985.